Yukon Government Report on

Early Childhood Development

Activities & Expenditures 2004–2007

Message from the Minister

As Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, I am pleased to present a combined annual report on Early Childhood Development activities for the years 2004 through to 2006.

In order to ensure a bright future for our territory we must invest in programs and services to help families and children. Early childhood development is essential in helping a child achieve his or her potential. The skills and abilities of our children are linked to their personal success and ultimately to the success of society.

The Government of Yukon recognizes this and has worked over the past several years to ensure that all children are given the strongest start possible. Our government has increased funding and supports to families, child care operators and services to children. These increases help ensure Yukon children get the start in life they need.

We will continue to work with the federal government, our provincial and territorial colleagues, First Nations, and our community organizations and service providers to improve the services and programs available to Yukon families and children.

Glenn Hart
Minister
Health and Social Services

Agreements

Early Childhood Development Agreement

In September 2000, Canada's First Ministers (with the exception of Quebec) made a joint commitment to improve and expand early childhood development (ECD) programs. Priority areas identified for this funding included:

- Promotion of healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
- Improvement of parenting and family supports
- Strengthening of early childhood development, learning and care
- Strengthening of community supports

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Multilateral Framework (2003)

In 2003, building on the commitment of the First Ministers, federal, provincial and territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services (with the exception of Quebec) agreed to make additional investments in the specific areas of early learning and child care. The resulting Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care supports improved access to affordable, quality regulated child care services to children 0 to 6 years of age.

Federal Funding to Support Early Childhood Development

YUKON ALLOCATION		
YEAR	**ECD* $**	**ELCC** $**
2001/02	288,000	
2002/03	370,000	
2003/04	447,000	$25,000
2004/05	432,000	$150,000
2005/06	428,000	$230,000
2006/07	Funding extended at 2005/06 rate	$311,000
2007/08	Funding extended at 2005/06 rate	$369,000
2008/09 – 2013/14	Funding extended at 2005/06 rate	Funding extended at 2007/08 rate

**ECD: Early Childhood Development Communiqué funding commitment 2001/02 to 2005/06.*

***ELCC: Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care Agreement funding commitment 2003/04 to 2007/08. Funding for both these agreements flows through the Canada Social Transfer (CST).*

Note: July 2007 the federal government announced that the ECD and ELCC funding will be extended to 2013/2014 at the rate of payment as per the last year of the agreement.

Public Reporting

As a part of the ECD Agreement and the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care, governments agreed to report annually on their investments. The Yukon government began this process by producing a baseline report in 2000/01 that provided an overview of government expenditures in the area of early childhood development prior to the new federal investment.

In subsequent years, reports have been prepared for both the ECD Agreement and the Multilateral Framework Agreement. In addition to these reports, information on the wellbeing of children using a common set of indicators has been provided.

Investment of ECD Funds in Yukon

Funding from the ECD Agreement is being directed in two key program areas — the Child Development Centre and the Healthy Families Program.

From April 2004 to March 2007, the Yukon government received a total of $1,288,000 under the ECD initiative to support enhanced programs for young children and their families. The table noted below identifies the financial investments by the Yukon government, and the additional federal contribution.

ECD INVESTMENTS

	2000/01 Baseline Investment	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual
Healthy Families Program	$352,000	1,026,397	$936,753	$973,948
Child Development Centre	$1,151,000	$1,405,989	$1,537,989	$1,607,989
Total Investment	**$1,503,000**	**$2,432,386**	**$2,474,742**	**$2,581,937**
BREAKDOWN				
Investment by Government of Yukon	$1,503,000	$2,000,386	$2,046,742	$2,153,937
Federal ECD Funding		$432,000	$428,000	$428,000

Healthy Families

The Healthy Families Program is an intensive home-visitation program delivered in partnership with public health nurses and Healthy Families support workers. Healthy Families provides in-home assistance and education through regular home visits to support parents in being the best parents possible for their infants, so they receive the care and stimulation so crucial to their long-term well-being and healthy development.

The priority of the Healthy Family program is early intervention with children and families that are assessed as overburdened. Healthy Family Support Workers can remain involved with a family until a child reaches school age, while in other cases, only short-term involvement is required.

HEALTHY FAMILIES' STATISTICS

	Baseline 2000	2004	2005	2006
Screened Births	251	258	231	264
Assessments requiring follow-up visits	47	49	41	45
# of children in program				
• Age 0-1	40	45	38	49
• Age 1-2	14	34	29	26
• Age 2-3	0	23	24	25
• Age 3-4	0	15	16	18
• Age 4-5	0	16	13	13
# of families in program	N/A	138	143	126

Child Development Centre

The Child Development Centre is a Yukon-wide resource specializing in early intervention for children from birth to school entry. Their main office is located in Whitehorse, with sub-offices located at Kwanlin Dun First Nation (Whitehorse), and in the rural communities of Dawson City and Watson Lake. In Whitehorse, families and children are seen during home visits or office appointments, and in structured programs such as preschool, group sessions and in child care program visits. In rural Yukon, visits are held at the Health Centre, school and First Nation offices.

Program Highlights:

- Therapeutic preschool was re-designed to accept four-year-olds who need one-on-one support.
- Two-day-a-week preschool was created for three-year-olds with special needs, and a Super Kids group was formed for children needing assistance with their social/emotional development.
- FASD diagnosis is happening routinely for the preschool population.
- In the spring of 2006, a diagnostic team was established for youth (ages six to 18 years). Team members are comprised of the Department of Education's Special Programs, the pediatrician and the FASD coordinator.
- The Centre now has a permanent child psychologist.
- Final year for the Hanen Program, which provided training to child care workers to enhance language skills of younger children in daycare. Yukon College has provided credits towards Early Childhood Development certification for child care staff taking this program.
- A Yukon Guide to Services for families of children with autism was developed in collaboration with the department and relevant stakeholders.

YUKON CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE STATISTICS

Year	Population 0–4 years	Number of Referrals	Percentage of Population	Average Monthly Caseload
2004/05	2,088	639	30.6%	400
2005/06	1,801	619	34.3%	399
2006/07	1,858	692	37.2%	395

There continues to be a steady increase in the number of referrals to the Child Development Centre, and children are being referred at an earlier age. Approximately 58 per cent of children referred to the Centre in 2006/07 were under the age of three.

Early Learning and Child Care

Availability

There is licensed child care available in all Yukon communities through either child care centres or family day homes. The following chart outlines the number of children between the ages of 0 to 11, and the number of facilities, child care spaces available, and children in licensed care in Yukon between 2004 to 2006. Approximately 30% of Yukon children from birth to 11 years of age have access to regulated child care. This is considerably higher than the Canadian average of 15.5%.

AVAILABILITY STATISTICS

Year	# of Children 0–11 years	# of Licensed Child Care Facilities *(includes child care centres and family day homes)*	# of Licensed Child Care Spaces	# of Children in Licensed Child Care
2004	4,095	69	1,340	1,070 (26%)
2005	4,051	79	1,336	1,000 (25%)
2006	4,040	72	1,484	950 (24%)

Affordability

Yukon government provides support to licensed child care facilities through a number of different programs:

- The Direct Operating Program is available to all licensed facilities and provides assistance to operators with their operational costs.
- The Child Care Subsidy Program provides financial help to eligible families whose children attend licensed child care centres or family day homes. The amount of subsidy is determined through an income test that takes into account family size, net annual income and the community in which the parent lives. The Child Care Subsidy is a regulated program. The subsidy is an entitlement for all eligible families and there is no cap on the number of subsidized spaces. Approximately 70 per cent of licensed child care spaces are subsidized.
- Supported Child Care provides additional funding for child care centres and family day homes to assist with the increased costs of providing supports to children with special needs.
- The Child Care Services Development Fund is capital funding used to provide startup and enhancement grants to Yukon child care centres and family day homes for the purchase of equipment or facility renovations. This includes playground upgrades and toy/equipment replacement, which are required to meet health and safety standards as outlined in the Child Care Regulations.

Quality

Based on research, indicators of the quality of a child care program include the education and training of staff, as well as the staff-child ratio and play group size. The Yukon *Child Care Act* and Child Care Regulations set out these requirements.

CENTRE-BASED FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Age Group	Staff-Child Ratio	Group Size
Infant	1:4	Maximum 8
Toddler	1:6	Maximum 12
Preschool	1:8	Maximum 16
School-Age	1:12	Maximum 24

Licensed family day homes must follow these child-staff ratios:

- Not more than four infants
- Not more than six preschool children if three are infants
- Not more than eight preschool children if none are infants

If the person providing the licensed family day home program also cares for their own preschool children along with the other children in the program, then their own preschool children must be included in calculating the number of children to whom the program can be offered.

If the licensed family day home has an additional staff member available for supervision, the family day home may provide child care for up to four school-age children in addition to the number of preschool children.

No person is allowed to provide or offer a family day home to four or more children without obtaining a license from the Department.

The *Yukon Child Care Act* requires that all regulated child care facilities must work towards increased educational levels within their staff. In 2006, approximately 50 per cent of child care staff had some level of training, with 38 per cent having achieved the full Level 3 designation.

Fully qualified Level 3 child care workers earn approximately $18.50 per hour. Level 2 workers earn approximately $15.80, and Level 1 workers earn approximately $13.00. Untrained workers earn an average of $10–$12 per hour.

ELCC Investments in Regulated Child Care Services

Between 2004/05 and 2006/07 the federal government provided $691,000 towards ELCC investments in regulated child care services. The chart below outlines the total Yukon investment (including federal funding) in regulated child care services.

ELCC INVESTMENTS

	2000/01 Baseline Investment	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual
Regulated Child Care Services • Direct Operating Grant • Child Care Subsidy • Supported Child Care • Child Care Services Development Fund	$5,200,000	$5,013,000	$4,851,000	$4,395,000

Actual budget figures show a decline in regulated child care services for the past three years. This can be explained partially due to a decrease in the number of children between 0–11 years of age, a decline in the number of parents applying and eligible for subsidy, and current subsidy regulation/policies that limit the amount the department can provide to families. The Department is reviewing regulations/policies regarding the Direct Operating Program, Subsidy Program and Supported Child Care with the aim to enhance supports for parents and child care operators.

Well-being of Yukon Children

As part of the Early Childhood Development Agreement, First Ministers (with the exception of Quebec) made a commitment to report on child well-being. The common set of indicators was developed by using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. Due to difficulty in maintaining continuity of the longitudinal survey in the North, and the costs involved, Yukon has not been included in the study. Until pertinent data becomes more accessible, Yukon is not able to fully report on child well-being based on the common indicators. The data that is available for Yukon is noted in the chart below.

INDICATORS OF WELL-BEING

	Baseline 1999/2000	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Healthy Births				
• Births in Yukon	363	371	328	353
• % of low birth weights *(under 2500 grams)*	3.0%	2.7%	3.1%	4.8%
• % of high birth weights *(over 4000 grams)*	19.0%	19.1%	11%	15.3%
• Pre-term birth rate *(under 37 weeks)*	3.6%	5.9%	5.8%	7.9%
Infant Mortality Rate* *(per 1000 live births)*	2.6%	5.7%	5.7%	4.8%
Hospitalization due to Injury *(% of child admissions due to injury)*	9.4%	3%	1%	2%
# of Cases among Children 0 – 6:				
• Measles	0	0	0	0
• Haemophilus influenza-b	0	0	0	0
• Meningococcal C	0	0	0	0

**Calculated using a three-year average to soften spikes created by low sample size.*

Source: Yukon Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Canada, Department of Health & Social Services, and Whitehorse General Hospital. Due to Yukon's small population, caution is advised when referring to the figures in the chart above.

The following information has been provided through the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY), Northern Component — 2003/04 and 2004/05. These statistics provide additional information regarding Yukon children.

The NLSCY collected data on children who were born in 1998 and 1999 and who were enrolled in Senior Kindergarten in September 2003 and 2004 in Yukon. The "Canada" label represents the NLSCY, Cycle 5 and 6 sample portion of all children who were five years old on December 31, 2003 and December 31, 2004 and living in the 10 provinces.

EMOTIONAL PROBLEM/ANXIETY

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not High Emotional Problems	90.5	87.6%	86.7%	86.3%
High Emotional Problems	9.5*	12.4%	13.3%	13.7%

**Marginal Estimate — while this estimate meets Statistics Canada's quality standards, there is a high level of error associated with it.*

HYPERACTIVITY/INATTENTION

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not High Hyperactivity	82.3%	80.8%	80.2%	82.4%
High Hyperactivity	17.7%	19.2%	19.8%	17.6%

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION/CONDUCT PROBLEM

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not High Aggression	85.4%	83.0%	87.8%	83.9%
High Aggression	14.6%	17.0%	12.2%	16.1%

PARENTAL DEPRESSION

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not High Depressive Symptoms	88.2%	88.1%	87.4%	90.3%
High Depressive Symptoms	11.8%	11.9%	12.6%	9.7%

FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not High Family Dysfunction	85.4%	83.7%	79.0%	86.1%
High Family Dysfunction	14.6%	16.3%	21.0%	13.9%

PARENTING: POSITIVE INTERACTION

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
Not Low Positive Interaction	84.3%	82.3%	81.9%	85.7%
Low Positive Interaction	15.7%	17.7%	18.1%	14.3%

MOTHER'S HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
High School Graduation or Less	13.6%	35.5%	21.1%	33.2%
Some Post-Secondary	32.6%	15.7%	29.9%	13.1%
College or University Degree (including trades)	53.8%	48.8%	49.1%	53.7%

FATHER'S HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Category	Yukon 2003/04	Canada 2003/04	Yukon 2004/05	Canada 2004/05
High School Graduation or Less	25.3%	36.8%	28.1%	35.5%
Some Post-Secondary	24.5%	14.8%	18.2%	11.7%
College or University Degree (including trades)	50.2%	48.4%	53.7%	52.8%

Source:

- *NLSCY, Survey of Northern Children, Cycle 5 (2003/04) and Cycle 6 (2004/05); data presented is weighted for non-response adjustment; data based on Nunavut and Yukon. (Only Yukon data is presented in this report.)*
- *NLSCY, Cycle 5 (2003/04) and Cycle 6 (2004/05); data presented is weighted; data based on the 10 provinces only.*
- *Totals may not add exactly due to rounding.*

Early Childhood Development Expenditures for Years 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES

Key Action Areas	Baseline 2000/01 ($000)	2004/05 ($000)	2005/06 ($000)	2006/07 ($000)
1. Pregnancy, Birth and Infancy				
• Pre-natal clinics, well-baby clinics, childhood immunizations	328	435	622	577
• FASD prevention/education	51	N/A	21	TBD
Subtotal	379	435	643	577
2. Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care				
• Healthy Families Program	352	1,026	937	974
• Childcare Services	5,335	5,013	4,851	4,395
Subtotal	5,687	6,039	5,788	5,369
3. Parenting and Family Supports				
• Family Services	81	254	376	405
• Children's Services	931	1,587	1,499	1,375
• Adoption	285	350	402	378
• Yukon Child Benefit	170	368	358	344
Subtotal	1,467	2,559	2,635	2,502
4. Community Supports				
Contributions to community agencies				
• Child Development Centre	1,151	1,406	1,538	1,574
• Parenting/Counselling Agencies	873	949	1,068	1,106
• First Nation Child Welfare	0	71	65	65
Subtotal	2,024	2,426	2,671	2,745
Yukon Government Expenditures On Early Childhood Development	**9,557**	**11,459**	**11,737**	**11,193**

Yukon
Health and Social Services